

Visas: uniform format for forms for affixing visa for travel documents which are not recognised

2001/0081(CNS) - 18/02/2002 - Final act

PURPOSE: The establishment of a uniform format for forms affixed to visas issued by Member States for travel documents not recognised. **COMMUNITY MEASURE:** Council Regulation 333/2002/EC on a uniform format for forms for affixing the visa issued by Member States to persons holding travel documents not recognised by the Member State drawing up the form. **CONTENT:** Since the 1998 Vienna Action Plan the European Union has recognised the importance of harmonising visa formats in line with new, security aware, technological advances. The Tampere European Council in 1999 gave added impetus to this task when calling for an active policy on visas and false documents. Currently, Member States use forms for affixing visa in cases where the person holds travel documents which are not recognised by the Member State drawing up the form. Often these forms fail to meet stringent security requirements. For this reason, the European Union has drawn up this Regulation to provide for harmonised forms thereby rendering them more secure. The Regulation defines forms as "form for affixing a visa". It refers to the document issued by the authorities of a Member State to the holder of a travel document which is not recognised by that Member State. An Annex, accompanying the Regulation sets out what the form should look like. It is up to individual Member States to decide whether they should issue a separate form for dependants. Specifically, the forms must contain security features, including enhanced anti-forgery, counterfeiting and falsification standards. Similarly there will be standardised procedures and technical methods for filling in the form affixed to the visa. In order, to hinder and prevent acts of counterfeiting and forgery the specifications on how to draw up these standards will be kept secret. In accordance with implementation agreement on the association of Norway and Iceland this Regulation will have implications for these two countries. Concerning the Protocol on the position of the United Kingdom and Ireland annexed to the Treaty of European Union, the United Kingdom has given notice that it will participate in the application of this Regulation. Ireland on the other hand has notified the Commission that it does not wish to apply and participate in the provisions of this Regulation. **ENTRY INTO FORCE:** 23/02/02.